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E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/22/2018
TAGS: [CU](#) [KDEM](#) [KPAO](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [SOCI](#)
SUBJECT: FOLLOW-UP MAY 21 - DAY OF SOLIDARITY WITH CUBAN
PEOPLE

REF: A. (A) STATE 051536
[1](#)B. (B) LIMA 870

Classified By: Ambassador P. Michael McKinley reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (SBU/NF) Post took the following actions to support the
Day of Solidarity with the Cuban People:

- a. Placed IIP-provided editorial in El Comercio edition of May 20, under the by-line of the Ambassador. El Comercio (center-right, circulation of 90,000) is Peru's "paper of record" and the op-ed appeared on the editorial page, just under the paper's own daily editorial. The op-ed appeared under the headline "The Drama of the Political Prisoners" with the sub-head "Cuba and Some Lukewarm and Insufficient Reforms" (added by El Comercio editors).
- b. Issued as Press Releases the IIP-produced story on Solidarity Day by Eric Green and President Bush's Proclamation of May 21.
- c. Added links on the Embassy's websites in Spanish and English to the IIP story and Presidential remarks on Cuba Solidarity Day.
- d. Contacted several local NGOs active in promoting human rights, including four heavily involved in prisoner rights and prisoners of conscience and asked them all to take action to support Solidarity Day. Many of the NGOs we contacted showed an interest but did not confirm directly with us when or how they would take action.
- e. However, two events were added by two of these NGOs to the Solidarity Day website. These included a musical event held on Saturday, May 17 in the middle class district of Lima, Pueblo Libre. The President of the PPC and former presidential candidate, Lourdes Flores; PPC Congressman Raul Castro; Salvador Heresi, the mayor of San Miguel district of Lima and David Flores from the "Red Huamista" group all spoke about Cuba's need for democracy and freedom. Approximately 1,500 young people participated.

[1](#)2. (SBU/NF) Post reported comments made by President Garcia and the President of the European Parliament in reftel (B) made at the opening of the Latin America-EU Business Summit in Lima May 15. On the morning of May 16, at the opening of the summit of political leaders, President Garcia made the following comment during his welcoming remarks: "We believe firmly in democracy, we believe firmly in liberty, we know that it is only through free elections, a truly free press and freedom of free association and political thought that our peoples can express themselves("

[1](#)3. (C) A high-level figure from the ruling APRA party told us that during the summit President Garcia repeatedly called on certain countries not to "isolate" themselves ("aislarse") from others in the region with anti-democratic practices -- a clear play on the word "isla" (island in Spanish) that made the reference to Cuba clear. President Garcia's deputy chief of staff also told us May 21 the President would likely

reiterate publicly his concern for political prisoners in future public fora, including during the May 23 meeting of South American presidents in Brazil (he promised to confirm these plans with us at the earliest opportunity.)

MCKINLEY